

## **Mastery Charter School Wellness Program**

### **Purpose**

Mastery Charter Schools recognizes that child and adolescent obesity has become a major health concern in the United States. The Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA) funds child nutrition programs and establishes required nutrition standards for school lunch and breakfast programs. In accordance with the requirements of the HHFKA, each school in the network shall implement this Wellness Policy that includes goals for nutrition promotion, nutrition education and physical activity.

Mastery is committed to providing a school environment that promotes student and staff wellness and supports students in their efforts to become fit, healthy and ready to learn. Through implementation of this policy, students shall become more knowledgeable and skilled in making behavior choices that support optimum health.

### **Authority**

Mastery adopts the Wellness Policy in accordance with federal and state laws.[1][2]

Mastery shall on an annual basis, at minimum, inform and update the public, including parents/guardians, students, and others in the community, about the contents, implementation and assessment of this policy.[2]

### **Wellness Policy Goals**

The goals as outlined below shall apply to every school in the network; current and future.

1. Goals for Nutrition Promotion
  - a. Age appropriate posters will be posted on the walls where food and beverages are served to students highlighting and encouraging the value of good nutrition.
  - b. The school lunch program will have promotional days during the school year where at least one new nutritional alternative menu item will be featured as part of the menu pattern meal component. The food services staff members will promote this nutritional alternative during meal service with posters, flyers, and/or hand-outs regarding the nutritional menu item alternative.
  - c. The principal or designee will encourage food products that meet the nutrition standards of the HHFKA when applicable during the school day.
  - d. Food service staff, in consultation with the Principal or designee, will coordinate obtaining student input on menu planning that will include taste testing food options, satisfaction surveys, and other activities that promote nutrition awareness.
  - e. Parents will be provided the nutritional standards of the HHFKA and encourage parents to pack lunches and snacks that meet the HHFKA nutritional standards.

## **Guidelines**

The Wellness Policy will establish the following:

1. School Wellness Councils – Mastery will develop one School Wellness Council, modeled after the CDC Coordinated School Health Program for wellness council development.
2. Mastery shall establish nutrition standards for all foods and beverages sold or served to students on school property during the school day, including those available outside of reimbursable school meal programs.
3. Nutrition education – All students shall receive nutrition education that is interactive and teaches the skills they need to adopt healthy lifestyles. Nutrition education will be provided within or in addition to the sequential, comprehensive, standards-based health education program.
4. Nutrition promotion –Mastery aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Mastery schools shall promote nutrition by providing appropriate nutrition education in accordance with this policy. [2]
5. Physical education – All students will have access to a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based physical education program taught by a certified health and physical education teacher.
6. Physical activity – Opportunities shall be provided for every student to develop the knowledge and skills for specific physical activities, maintain physical fitness, regularly participate in physical activity, and understand the short and long-term benefits of a physically active and healthful lifestyle.
7. Other school-based activities – A healthy school environment shall be promoted and maintained, providing consistent wellness messaging and is promoting overall health for students, staff and the school environment.

## **School Wellness Council**

1. Mastery will create one NST (Network Support Team)Level School Wellness Council (the “Council”) which shall be comprised of but not limited to the following: Mastery school level administrators (identified as the Principal, Assistant Principal of Operations, Assistant Principal of Culture or other employee designated by the Principal), students, parent(s)/guardian(s), physical education teacher(s), school health professionals (identified as a school nurse and a representative from the nursing vendor), representatives from the food service management companies (The Nutrition Group) and representative(s) from health-related organizations and agencies. The Council will also include representatives from private and public agencies, as determined by the council leadership. [2]
2. The Council shall serve as an advisory committee for student health issues and shall be responsible for developing, implementing and periodically reviewing and updating the Wellness Policy that complies with law to recommend to Mastery for adoption. [13]
3. The Council may evaluate current health-related policies and administrative procedures. The Council may identify and raise awareness to communicate health related issues to school administration as it relates to schools and student involvement.

4. The Council will designate the principal or a designated staff member at each school to evaluate the progress of the policy to ensure compliance, where applicable. This Council; comprised of the Assistant Principal of Operations, gym teacher, and other staff nominated by the Principal; will provide oversight and guidance when technical questions arise. The Council will have the ultimate responsibility to audit schools and provide reports to the schools and the public. Upon adoption of the Wellness Policy, a policy rubric will be created. This rubric will be used to evaluate programs at Mastery schools. The results of the rubric, by law, will be publicized. [13]
5. The Wellness Policy will be evaluated at least every three years (triennial assessment). This assessment will be made available to the public. The assessment will include: compliance of participating schools with the wellness policy; comparison of the local policy to a model school wellness policy; and progress made in attaining the goals of the wellness policy.

### **Nutrition Standards**

All foods available in Mastery schools during the school day shall be offered to students with consideration for promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity. Foods provided through the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Programs shall comply with established federal nutrition standards. [3][4][5][6]

### **Nutrition Education Goals**

The following activities will be coordinated in each Mastery school:

1. Principals will ensure each student receives at least one presentation per school year that promotes good nutrition and nutrition education. This can be done through classroom visits, whole grade assemblies, or whole school assemblies.
2. The school lunch menu will include nutritional information, activities, recipes, and/or any other information that encourages the selection of healthy food items and activities.

### **School Meal Guidelines**

1. Information shall be shared with parents/guardians and students about the nutritional content of meals.
2. Mastery shall engage students and parents/guardians in focus groups using taste-tests of new entrees and surveys to identify new, healthful and appealing food choices.
3. Mastery shall arrange bus schedules and utilize various methods to serve school breakfasts, including serving breakfast in the classroom, "grab-and-go" breakfast, or scheduled breakfast in the cafeteria.
4. Parents/Guardians and students shall be notified of the availability of school meal programs and the possibility of providing free or reduced-price meals.
5. Parents/Guardians shall be encouraged to provide a healthy breakfast for their child(ren) through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other means.
6. Students shall be discouraged from sharing their foods or beverages with one another, given concerns about allergies and diet restrictions.

7. As a best practice, school celebrations that involve food during the school day will occur no more than one (1) time per class per month. Each celebration should include foods or beverages that meet established nutrition standards and applicable administrative procedures.
8. As a best practice, schools will not use unhealthy foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior.
9. Schools will not withhold food or beverages as a punishment. All reimbursable school meals served through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs, After School Feeding Program, and any other reimbursable school meal programs implemented by Mastery shall:
  1. Be appealing and attractive to students.
  2. Be served in clean and pleasant settings.
  3. Be in compliance, at a minimum, with nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations, including USDA guidelines under the School Meals Initiative.
  4. Ensure that most grains offered in meals are whole grain rich.
  5. Ensure that foods are free of artificial sweeteners, flavors or colors.
  6. Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables daily, including dark green, red/orange and legumes weekly.
  7. Decrease the salt and sugar content in meals, and limit the total fat content to thirty percent (30%) of calories and saturated fat content to ten percent (10%) of calories in a weekly average.

### **Meal Times and Scheduling**

1. Schools shall ensure that they are open in time for student meal times.
2. As a best practice, students shall be provided with at least five (5) minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and ten (10) minutes after sitting down for lunch.
3. Meal periods shall be scheduled at appropriate hours, as defined by Mastery. Schools should make every attempt to schedule lunch between 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. No meal period should extend beyond 2 p.m.
4. Student tutoring and club or organizational meetings or activities shall not be scheduled during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities. Students should be allowed to obtain their food prior to an organized meeting or activity.
5. In elementary schools, lunch periods shall normally be scheduled to follow lunchtime recess periods.
6. Students shall be provided access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before meals or snacks.
7. Mastery shall accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (e.g., orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).

### **Snacks**

Mastery will not purchase for sale to students, during the school day, any snacks that do not comply with the Smart Snack standards as outlined by the HHFKA.

### **Beverages**

Drinking water shall be available and accessible to students, without restriction and at no cost to the student, at all meal periods and throughout the school day. [5][6]

Mastery observes all beverage policies that are allowed in the Smart Snack standards of the HHFKA. Product selection for schools must be made from the guidelines listed below for beverages. Online tools cannot be used to evaluate beverage products:

1. Drinking water with no additives except those minerals normally added to tap water.
2. Unflavored and flavored low-fat and nonfat milks (including nutritionally equivalent milk alternatives as permitted in the school meal programs): elementary schools – may be sold in up to 8-ounce servings; middle and high school - may be sold up to 12 ounces.
3. 100% fruit and/or vegetable juice (100% juice diluted with water, without carbonation with no added sweeteners or additives): elementary schools - maximum serving size is 8 ounces; middle and high schools - maximum serving size is 12 ounces.
4. Caffeine: Only caffeine-free beverages allowed for elementary and middle school students. High school students are allowed caffeine. Foods and beverages that contain trace amounts of naturally-occurring caffeine substances, such as chocolate milk, are exempt.
5. No artificial sweeteners, flavors or colors. Allowable sweeteners in beverages include but are not limited to the following: sugar (raw, refined, unrefined, cane, brown, turbinado, white), invert sugar, dextrin, sucrose, honey, corn syrup, high fructose corn syrup, cane juice, molasses, xylitol, sorbitol, mannitol, galactose, lactose, fructose and Splenda. These sugars are not chemically derived.

Additional beverages for high school students (grades 9-12):

1. Calorie-free beverages: maximum serving size is 16 fluid ounces; calorie-free flavored water without carbonation; and carbonated beverages are allowed in high schools with limits. Carbonated beverages must meet calorie requirements <5 calories per 8 fluid ounces or ≤10 calories per 20 fluid ounces.
2. Electrolyte replacement drinks that do not exceed 12 fluid ounces and that contain up to 40 calories per 8-oz container or up to 60 calories per 12-oz container. Sodium should not exceed 110 milligrams per 8-ounce serving. Potassium should not exceed 60 milligrams per 8-ounce serving. Electrolytes and minerals added might include: sodium, potassium, chlorine and phosphorous. No artificial flavorings or sweeteners. These drinks will be placed in gymnasiums, field houses, and other areas where high intensity athletic activities take place. These drinks may not be placed in cafeterias or food service areas.
3. Coffee sold through a la carte service is permissible.

### **Competitive Foods/Beverages**

Competitive foods and beverages are defined as all foods and beverages sold to students outside the school meal programs, on the school campus, and at any time during the school day. Sold refers to the exchange of money, tokens, or the use of some type of prepaid account to purchase an item and includes items sold a la carte, in vending machines, at school stores, during fundraisers, or at any other

venue that sells food/beverages to students during the school day. For purposes of this definition, school campus shall include all areas of the property under the jurisdiction of the school that are accessible to students during the school day, and school day shall include the period from the midnight before to thirty (30) minutes after the end of the official school day.

All non-sold competitive foods available to students, which may include but are not limited to foods and beverages offered as rewards and incentives, at classroom parties and celebrations, or as shared classroom snacks, shall meet or exceed the standards established by the district. If the offered competitive foods do not meet or exceed the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, the following standards shall apply:

1. Rewards and Incentives: (Schools may choose one of the options below)
  - Foods and beverages shall NOT be used as a reward or incentive in Mastery schools.
  - Foods and beverages shall not be used as reward for classroom or school activities unless the reward is an activity that promotes a positive nutrition message (e.g., guest chef, field trip to farm or farmers market, etc.)
  - Other, please describe (must be approved by Wellness Council prior to use)
2. Classroom Parties and Celebrations: (Schools may choose one or more of the options below)
  - a.  Only non-food based parties and celebrations shall occur on the school campus during the school day in district schools.
  - b.  Classroom parties/celebrations with food/beverages shall be limited to no more than one (1) per month in each classroom.
  - c.  Parents/Guardians shall be informed through newsletters or other efficient communication methods that foods/beverages should only be brought in when requested for scheduled parties.
  - d.  Classroom parties shall offer a minimal amount of foods (maximum 2-3 items) containing added sugar as the primary ingredient (e.g. cupcakes, cookies) and will provide the following:
    - i. Fresh fruits/vegetables; and
    - ii. Water, 100 percent juice, 100 percent juice diluted with water, low-fat milk or nonfat milk.
  - e.  when possible, foods/beverages for parties and celebrations shall be provided by the food service department to help prevent food safety and allergy concerns.
  - f.  Food celebrations shall not occur until thirty (30) minutes after the end of the last lunch period.
  - g.  Other, please describe (must be approved by Wellness Council prior to use)
3. Shared Classroom Snacks:
  - a.  Shared classroom snacks are not permitted in district schools.
  - b.  Other, please describe (must be approved by Wellness Council prior to use)

Exclusive competitive food and/or beverage contracts shall be approved by Mastery, in accordance with provisions of the legal code as required. [9] NST Food Operations shall provide a list of suggested nonfood ideas and healthy food and beverages alternatives to participating schools, which should be

communicated to families and posted via the district website, student handbook, newsletters, posted notices and/or other efficient communication methods.

### **Fundraisers**

All foods that meet the established nutrition standards may be sold for fundraising purposes on the school campus during the school day without a limit on frequency. The standards do not apply to items sold during non-school hours, weekends, or off-campus fundraising events. A maximum of five (5) exempt fundraisers in each elementary and middle school building per year, and a maximum of ten (10) exempt fundraisers will be permitted in each high school building per year. Each fundraiser may not exceed one (1) school week. Exempt fundraisers may not be sold in the food service areas during meal periods.

Recordkeeping - Schools must keep a record of all exempt fundraisers to assure they are not exceeding the yearly limits. Fundraising records must be kept on file for four (4) years and made available upon request. Schools need to ensure that receipts, nutrition labels or product specifications are maintained by those designated as responsible for competitive food service at the various venues in the school. All parts of the school involved with selling food to students during the school day will have a role in meeting these requirements.

Monitoring and Compliance - The PA Department of Education will be responsible for monitoring compliance with the requirements of the competitive food nutrition standards through periodic reviews of school Mastery records and operations.

### **Nutrition Education**

Nutrition education programs will:

1. Be consistent with law, regulations and established academic standards for Health, Safety and Physical Education, and Family and Consumer Sciences. [10]
2. Teach, encourage and support healthy eating by students.
3. Be taught across the curriculum.
4. Include enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, participatory activities such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits and school gardens.
5. Promote fruit, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices.
6. Emphasize caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure.
7. Provide links with school meal programs, other school foods, nutrition-related community services and Central Level and local Coordinated School Wellness Councils.
8. Provide professional development to teachers and nutrition professionals to enhance their skills in nutrition education training.

## **Nutrition Promotion [2]**

Mastery staff shall cooperate with agencies and community organizations to provide opportunities for appropriate student projects related to nutrition.

Consistent nutrition messages shall be disseminated and displayed throughout the Mastery, schools, classrooms, cafeterias, homes, community and media.

Consistent nutrition messages shall be demonstrated by avoiding use of unhealthy food items in classroom lesson plans and school staff avoiding eating less healthy food items in front of students.

Mastery schools shall encourage parents/guardians to provide healthy meals for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials or other means.

## **Physical Education**

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle goes beyond eating well-balanced healthy meals. It includes a level of physical activity. All schools within the network are encouraged to include any number of the following activities:

1. The principal or designee will ensure there is age-appropriate equipment and supplies available during recess time for students to participate in physical activities.
2. Students will be encouraged by school staff members supervising recess time to participate in some type of physical activity. This may include, but not limited to: walking, playing games, rope jumping, and/or using playground equipment.
3. The principal will encourage classroom teachers to incorporate brief, physical activity breaks into the school day to establish an environment that promotes regular physical activity throughout the school day.
4. The Principal or designee will coordinate special events that highlight physical activity, which may include field days, walk-a-thons, and activity tournaments or competitions. The Principal or designee may involve parents, community members and students in the planning and execution of these events.
5. The Principal or designee may offer students opportunities to participate in after-school intramural and/or interscholastic team activities coordinated and under the supervision of school staff members.
6. The Principal or designee will support after-school activities and clubs where physical activity for students is included as a key component to the activity's or club's purpose. These clubs may include, but not limited to gardening, walking and exercise classes.

The physical education program will:

1. Be consistent with law, regulations and established academic standards for Health, Safety and Physical Education. [11][12]
2. Not be listed and referred to as a prep course.



3. Be recognized as an integral part of the core curriculum.
4. Be consistent and aligned with local, state and federal standards and guidelines.
5. Ensure that every effort is made to optimize physical education time in shared spaces (cafeterias, auditoriums, etc.).
6. Include a physical fitness assessment for each student, using a fitness assessment tool for grades 3 to 12.
7. Devote at least fifty percent (50%) of class time to moderate to vigorous physical activity.
8. Be designed to meet the needs of all students (athletic and nonathletic), feature cooperative as well as competitive activities, and focus on understanding and ownership of personal fitness and wellness for life.
9. Include components related to self-management, movement, cooperation, fair play and social skills.
10. Take into account gender and cultural differences in students' interests.
11. Encourage classroom teachers to integrate concepts of movement and wellness across the curriculum.
12. Be an enjoyable experience.
13. Provide quality professional development to all physical education teachers to stay current with research and current programs.
14. Encourage and actively engage families and community members to become advocates for quality physical education.
15. Not support or include "contract" or "waiver" opportunities for students.
16. Include topics of pedestrian and bicycle safety and traffic rules at appropriate grade levels.

All Mastery students must participate in physical education. [11]

### **Physical Activity**

Students will acquire the knowledge and skills to understand the benefits of being physically active.

1. Time will be devoted, in the elementary schedule, for a supervised and safe recess.
2. Elementary students will be given "Movement Breaks" every ninety (90) minutes of seat time.
3. Opportunities will be provided before and after school for school physical activities, including clubs, intramurals and interscholastic athletics.
4. Opportunities for Mastery staff to be physically active will be encouraged.
5. Schools will create communication to apprise students, staff and families of programs that support physical activity and wellness in the community (i.e. clubs, gyms, farmers markets, etc.)
6. Physical activity shall not be used as a form of punishment or consequence.
7. Mastery will encourage active commuting to and from school for both students and staff.

### **Other School-Based Activities**

Other school-based activities related to student and staff wellness shall ensure that:

1. A non-stigmatizing atmosphere is provided for all students.
2. Health screenings are provided for students.

3. Care is provided to students for chronic conditions.
4. A safe, clean and hygienic environment is maintained in all schools.
5. As a best practice, students may be involved in menu selections. Student surveys will be done, at a minimum 2 times per year, through the use of Parent Advisory Committees and Youth Advisory Committees at all schools.
6. To the extent possible Mastery shall utilize available funding and outside programs to enhance student wellness.
7. Prevention education, including topics of substance abuse, violence, HIV/STD/teen pregnancy, mental health and suicide, CPR/AED and fire/water safety will be provided to appropriate grades using appropriate resources and curriculum.

### **Staff Wellness**

Mastery will encourage and may provide opportunities and programs related to staff wellness, in collaboration with insurance providers and outside agencies.

### **Safe Routes to School**

Mastery shall cooperate with local municipalities, public safety agency, police departments and community organizations to develop and maintain safe routes for students to travel to and from school.

### **Assessment of Wellness Program**

The Council shall periodically conduct an assessment on the contents and implementation of this policy as part of a continuous improvement process to strengthen the policy and ensure appropriate implementation. The assessment shall include the extent to which Mastery schools are in compliance with law and policies related to student wellness and shall describe the progress made by Mastery in attaining the goals of this policy. [2]

Assessment methods shall be implemented in accordance with established guidelines and/or administrative procedures. Designated administrators, The Council, and school representatives shall participate, at different levels, in the assessment of this policy and established guidelines and/or administrative procedures.

1. NST Food Operations or a designee shall oversee the implementation, monitoring and assessment of this policy, related policies and established guidelines and/or administrative procedures. S/He shall be responsible for monitoring Mastery schools, programs and curriculum to ensure compliance. [2]
  - a. Assessments will be conducted at each participating Mastery school in the state of Pennsylvania at least once every three years using a state approved assessment tool.
  - b. A comparison of each implemented program, as it relates to this model policy.
  - c. Progress made in attaining the goals of the wellness policy. This can include suggestions in how to better implement areas that are not meeting standards.
2. NST Food Operations or designee shall provide assessment results to the Mastery community. The assessment results shall be made available to the public. [2]

3. Implementation, assessment and monitoring of this policy are subject to review and approval by NST Food Operations or designee.

### **Marketing / Contracting**

Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus during the school day shall meet or exceed the established federal nutrition standards (USDA Smart Snacks in School) and comply with established Board policy and administrative regulations.

Exclusive competitive food and/or beverage contracts shall be approved by the Board, in accordance with provisions of law. Existing contracts shall be reviewed and modified to the extent feasible to ensure compliance with established federal nutrition standards, including applicable marketing restrictions.

### **Additional Wellness Policy Goals**

Nothing in this Policy shall prevent an individual school within the network from developing and implementing additional activities approved by NST Food Operations or the Board of each school. This is the baseline for all policies to be implemented at the school level. No changes or omissions should be made without prior written permission and approval from NST Food Operations or the Board of each school.

### Legal References:

- 1) 24 P.S. 1422.1
- 2) 42 U.S.C. 1758b
- 3) 42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq
- 4) 42 U.S.C. 1773
- 5) 7 CFR 210.10
- 6) 7 CFR 220.8
- 7) 7 CFR 210.11
- 8) 7 CFR 220.12a
- 9) 24 P.S. 504.1
- 10) 24 P.S. 1513
- 11) 24 P.S. 1512.1
- 12) 22 PA Code 4.27  
24 P.S. 1337.1  
24 P.S. 1422  
24 P.S. 1422.3  
P.L. 111-296  
7 CFR Part 210  
7 CFR Part 220
- 13) 42 USC 1758b.

CDC Coordinated School Health Program

Alliance for a Healthier Generation - Smart Snacks Calculator -

<https://foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/calculator>